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# New security system being instituted to combat espionage and press leaks

Washington—The Carter administration is instituting a new security classification system designed to limit the distribution of the country's most sensitive intelligence information to a small number of senior officials and members of Congress, government aides said yesterday.

The step represents a significant reversal in the government's recent policy in handling intelligence information and is said to reflect growing official concern over foreign espionage and leaks to the press.

The officials said that under a reform of the administration's classification system initiated by President Carter early this year, a new security designation, higher than top secret, has been created. The designation, known as "royal," would be applied to information gathered by the most sensitive intelligence sources and methods, they said.

An article in the *Daily Oklahoman* yesterday said the new security designation was designed to protect information that could politically embarrass the White House. It also reported that the "royal" designation had been applied to at least one cable in which Libyan officials described Billy Carter, the president's brother, as an "agent of influence."

While confirming the existence of a new security system, a White House spokesman said that suggestions that it was politically inspired were an "outrageous fabrication." Commenting on the "royal" designation, the official also said that "the system of which that designation is to be part has not yet been implemented."

A spokesman said the White House had not seen all the intelligence data pertaining to the Billy Carter case but that none of the documents seen by President Carter or his aides had been designated "royal."

Meanwhile, intelligence officials said that the new classification was due to go into effect soon and that no intelligence information had yet been given the new top designation.

One intelligence aide said the new system was the product of a couple of years of thought about how to handle the growing number of security breaches of sensitive information, including a case in 1978 when an employee of the Central Intelligence Agency gave Soviet agents details of an American surveillance satellite. The employee, Peter Kampiles, was caught and later found guilty of passing secrets to Moscow.

Under the new system, the aide said, intelligence infor-

mation that is less sensitive would be more widely circulated within the government and on Capitol Hill. At the same time, he said, the most sensitive data would be limited to a narrow circle of officials and members of Congress.

According to officials, only about two dozen senior aides in the executive branch and less than 10 members of Congress would be privy to information designated "royal."

The question of how widely sensitive information should be circulated in Washington has long been a controversial issue. In recent years, the administration, under congressional pressure, has agreed to give Congress wide access to intelligence information.

However, some members of Congress, informed of the new "royal" designation, are said to have expressed concern that the administration's new system will restrict the flow of information to Capitol Hill.

Adm. Stansfield Turner, the director of central intelligence, and Zbigniew Brzezinski, the president's national security adviser, are said to have initiated the new security system. Both officials, aides said, believed that the government was becoming so overwhelmed with intelligence information that intelligence aides could not distinguish between normal and really sensitive information.

As a result, some vital data, such as the country's capabilities for monitoring Soviet missile tests, was routinely circulated to large numbers of people. This was said to have fostered espionage and press disclosures.

Officials said that under the new system, the most sensitive data would be guarded more closely. "For example, if we had a spy in the Soviet Politburo, all of his reports would be classified 'royal,'" an intelligence aide said.

Officials said that at the suggestion of Admiral Turner and Mr. Brzezinski, President Carter asked the intelligence community last January to come up with a new system for designating and handling intelligence.

According to congressional aides, "royal" information would only be provided to the majority and minority leaders of the House and the Senate and the ranking Republican and Democratic members of the two congressional intelligence committees.

Noting that under the new system, Republican leaders would have access to "royal" intelligence, a White House aide said "this should prove that it is not political."